REMARKS

Claims 1-71 are pending in the application. Claims 1-27 have been previously withdrawn pursuant to an restriction requirement. Claims 28-71 stand rejected.

Of the pending claims currently under examination, Claims 28, 38, 52, 62, and 66 are independent.

Applicant has amended Claims 28, 38, 62, and 66.

No new matter is hereby being introduced with the claim amendments. The claim amendments are fully supported by the original disclosure. For example, support for the claim amendments may be found in the drawings.

Claims 28-71 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,360,137 to Royal, Jr. et al. ("Royal").

The Examiner relies upon server 18 of Royal to assert correspondence with the recited agent facility in the claims. However, server 18 of Royal does not satisfy the recited agent facility as variously set forth in the claims (as amended), for reasons that include, inter alia, Royal neither teaches nor suggests, in respect of server 18, the stated combination of functionalities possessed by the recited agent facility, as set forth in the claims. In brief, the functional interaction recited in the claims between the agent facility and fuel dispenser position is not satisfied in Royal by the interaction between server 18 and fuel dispenser 12. As discussed further, it is believed that the recited agent facility of the claims (as amended) distinguishes from server 18 of Royal at least on the basis of different and distinctive functionalities carried out with respect to the fuel dispenser position.

The rejection reads as follows in relevant part:

"Royal disclose the following. As described in Claims 28-71;

a. an agent facility (18);

. . .

d. a diagnostic test program operatively coupled to said receive means (see figure 7, elements (320, 324));

e. a maintenance procedure program associated with said diagnostic test program (320); ...". (Office Action, paragraph 3, pp. 2-3).

The rejection reads further as follows in relevant part:

"Royal, Jr. discloses ... a processor based server system which communicates with a forecourt controller in fuel dispensers in order to monitor said fuel dispensers for inventory and management functions as well as maintenance functions. See, for example, abstract, col. 1, lines 20-30 and 61-67, col. 2, lines 1-9, col. 7, lines 22-45, col. 8, lines 63-67, and col. 9, lines 1-17." (Office Action, paragraph 3, p. 3).

However, the disclosures of Royal concerning diagnostic operations and maintenance operations, notably the "maintenance and troubleshooting" element 320 and "troubleshooting diagnostics" element 324 in Fig. 7, do not at all pertain to server 18, insofar as executing, commanding, or otherwise directing such diagnostic operations and/or maintenance operations with respect to the fuel dispenser. Rather, these operations are discussed only in connection with remote browser 25, 27. (See, e.g., Col. 7, lines 46-67). In the representative processes depicted by Figs. 5 and 6, server 18 functions merely to deliver the home page (step 102) and page of links of addressable devices (step 106) to client browser 25, 27, without any communication occurring between server 18 and fuel dispenser 12, much less any interaction between server 18 and fuel dispenser 12 that involves monitoring the fuel dispenser, evaluating the monitored information to determine its allowability, and directing the performance of an operation, i.e., a diagnostic task, a maintenance task, and/or a control task, in the manner of the claims. (Col. 8, lines 14-18). Server 18 simply furnishes browsers 25, 27 with dispenser addressing information and does not participate beyond this point in any subsequent operations affecting the fuel

dispenser. (Incidentally, although the Examiner does not so state, it is considered that the client browsers 25, 27 of Royal do not satisfy the recited "agent facility" of the claims.)

Generally, it is not considered that server 18, which purportedly corresponds to the recited agent facility in the claims, has any functionality concerning the evaluation or analysis of monitored information received from the fuel dispenser position for the purpose of determining its allowability, and then directing the performance of an operation based on the evaluation/analysis results, i.e., a diagnostic operation, a maintenance operation, or a control operation vis-à-vis the fuel dispenser position, as variously set forth in Claims 28, 38, and 62 (as amended). Regarding Claims 52 and 66, server 18 of Royal does not possess any functionality directed to a diagnostic operation vis-à-vis the fuel dispenser.

Royal reads as follows concerning the principal functionality of server 18:

> "Each fueling position 14 is treated as a client capable of accessing services provided by the local server 18 and as a server capable of providing access to that particular position 14 and dispenser 12." (Col. 4, lines 38-40). (Emphasis added).

Royal provides the following explanation of such "services" (which define the interaction between the fuel dispenser and server 18):

> Most computer intensive functions are provided as services from the various local and remote servers 18, 26. Merchandising and business rule interpretations are handled in the system's nomenclature as services. Although certain functions and services may be run at the dispenser, most functions dealing with customer transactions, information dissemination and advertising or merchandising are preferably performed as services provided by the various local and remote servers. (Col. 5, lines 42-50). (Emphasis added).

Based on the foregoing disclosures of Royal, it is considered that such "services" defining the communication between the fuel dispenser and server 18 do not encompass the functionality of the recited agent facility, as variously set forth in the claims.

As regards the cooperative relationship between server 18 and browsers 25, 27 depicted in the processes of Figs. 5 and 6, and specifically the absence of any communication between server 18 and the fuel dispenser as part of such processes, reference is made to the following disclosures in relevant part:

> "Initially, a user at the browser 25, 27 starts a browser application and connects to a homepage at a site's uniform resource locator (URL) address (block 100). An HTTP server 18 having the URL address at the site's primary back office server delivers a home page for a site asset management system to the browser 25, 27 (block 102). ... The backroom server 18 queries a site configuration database to determine devices that should be present on the site's network, generate a page of links to devices that are remotely manageable, and returns this page to the client browser 25, 27 (block 106)." (Col. 7, lines 22-36).

> "As shown in FIG. 6, ... The basic process starts when a user of browser 25, 27 starts a browser application and connects to the homepage at a site's URL address of a backroom server 18 (block 200). The HTTP server 18 at the site's primary back office server delivers the homepage to the browser 25, 27 (block 202). ... The backroom server 18 will typically query a site configuration database to determine the devices that are present on the site's network, generate a page of links to those devices that are remotely manageable, and return the list to the browser 25, 27." (Col. 8, lines 1-18).

From the foregoing disclosures, it is evident that since server 18 itself does not communicate with the fuel dispenser during the processes depicted by Figs. 5 and 6, server 18 therefore cannot provide the functionalities of the recited agent facility vis-à-vis the fuel dispenser position, as set forth in the base claims (as amended).

In view of the foregoing, Applicant respectfully submits that base Claims 28 (as amended), 38 (as amended), 52, 62 (as amended), and 66 (as amended), and Claims 29-37, 39-51, 53-61, 63-65, and 67-71 dependent therefrom, are patentably distinguishable over Royal, Jr. et al. and respectfully requests that this rejection be withdrawn.

If the Examiner has any questions or comments that would advance prosecution of this case, the Examiner is invited to call the undersigned at 260/484-4526.

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Respectfully Submitted,

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RJK

Enclosures: Amendments to the Claims
(33 Sheets)
Explanatory Cover Sheet - Page 1
Petition for Extension of Time
Check No. 8148 ($ 110.)
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AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1 (withdrawn): A system, comprising:

a fuel dispenser position having a plurality of components; and

an agent facility operatively associated with said fuel dispenser position;

said agent facility being configured to perform a monitoring function and/or a control function relative to said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 2 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, wherein said agent facility being configured further to: (i) receive event information from said fuel dispenser position; (ii) process the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; (iii) evaluate and/or analyze the processed event information; (iv) execute a maintenance task in accordance with the results of the evaluation and/or analysis; (v) execute a control task in accordance with the results of the evaluation and/or analysis; or (vi) perform any combination of steps (i)-(v).

Claim 3 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, wherein said agent facility being configured further to: (i) perform a diagnostic operation in relation to event information

operatively received from said fuel dispenser position; and/or (ii) perform and/or direct a maintenance operation in relation to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the outcome of the diagnostic operation.

Claim 4 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 3, wherein the event information includes first data indicative of an event, and second data indicative of status, parameter value, condition, performance measure, or any combination thereof in relation to at least one component of said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 5 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 3, wherein the maintenance operation includes issuing command information adapted to reconfigure at least one component, issuing command information adapted to control at least one functional aspect of a fuel dispensing operation at said fuel dispenser position, issuing and/or scheduling a service call, issuing notification of a maintenance-ready condition, or any combination thereof.

Claim 6 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, wherein said agent facility being configured further to: (i) receive from said fuel dispenser position an event message indicative of an event occurring therein and/or event

information pertaining to the event indicated by the event message; (ii) manipulate variable information associated with the event indicated by the event message, in accordance with the event message and/or the event information; (iii) evaluate the manipulated variable information; and (iv) execute at least one task in accordance with the evaluation results.

Claim 7 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 6, wherein manipulation of the variable information involves adjustment of an event-related variable and/or an event-related counter, the event-related variable being indicative of an operating parameter and/or an operating condition of said fuel dispenser position, the event-related counter being indicative of a count of event occurrence.

Claim 8 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 6, wherein evaluation of the manipulated variable information involves analyzing the manipulated variable information relative to predetermined test information.

Claim 9 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 6, wherein execution of the at least one task involves directing the performance of at least one control task in said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 10 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, further comprises:

a variable table operatively associated with said agent facility, said variable table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) variable information pertaining to the respective event; and

an event table operatively associated with said agent facility, said event table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with relevant variable information from said variable table; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation.

Claim 11 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor, said processor being configured to process at least one information element of said data facility in accordance with the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

a rules facility, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively defining an evaluation function configured to evaluate the information processed by said processor and/or a tasking function configured to execute at least one task in accordance with results of the evaluation function.

Claim 12 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 11, wherein said rules facility having a programmable feature enabling selective modification of said plurality of rules, selective removal of rules, and/or selective addition of rules.

Claim 13 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor, said processor being configured to process at least one information element of said data facility in accordance with the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

a rules facility, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively defining: (i) a diagnostic function configured to perform a diagnostic operation in relation to information processed by said processor; (ii) a maintenance call operation configured to perform and/or direct the execution of at least one maintenance task pertaining to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; (iii) a control operation configured to perform and/or direct the execution of at least one control task pertaining to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; or (iv) any combination of (i)-(iii).

Claim 14 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 1, further comprises:

a remote facility including a management application, said remote facility being disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position, said management application being configured to enable management of at least one component of said fuel dispenser position in cooperation with said agent facility; and

a communications link between said agent facility and said remote facility.

Claim 15 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 14, wherein said agent facility including a client entity and said remote facility including a server entity.

Claim 16 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 15, wherein said agent facility and said remote facility being configured to perform management functions according to the Simple Network Management Protocol (SNMP) specification.

Claim 17 (withdrawn): A system for use in a refueling environment, said refueling environment comprising a plurality of fuel dispenser positions each having a respective plurality of components, said system comprising:

a management system configured to enable operative management of said refueling environment;

said management system including a management application in combination with an agent facility;

said agent facility being operatively arranged in a network management configuration with at least one fuel dispenser position.

Claim 18 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said agent facility being configured to: (i) perform a diagnostic operation in relation to event information operatively received from said refueling environment; and/or (ii) perform and/or direct a maintenance operation in relation to at least one fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the outcome of the diagnostic operation.

Claim 19 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said agent facility being configured to: (i) receive event information from said refueling environment; (ii) process the event information received from said refueling environment; (iii) evaluate and/or analyze the processed event information; (iv) execute a maintenance task in accordance with the results of the evaluation and/or analysis; (v) execute a control task in accordance with the results of the evaluation and/or analysis; or (vi) perform any combination of steps (i)-(v).

Claim 20 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said agent facility being configured to: (i) receive from said refueling environment at least one event message

indicative of at least one event occurring therein and/or event information pertaining to the at least one event indicated by the at least one event message; (ii) manipulate variable information associated with the at least one event indicated by the at least one event message, in accordance with the at least one event message and/or the event information; (iii) evaluate the manipulated variable information; and (iv) execute at least one task in accordance with the evaluation results.

Claim 21 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 20, wherein manipulation of the variable information involves adjustment of an event-related variable and/or an event-related counter, the event-related variable being indicative of an operating parameter and/or an operating condition pertaining to at least one fuel dispenser position, the event-related counter being indicative of a count of event occurrence.

Claim 22 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 20, wherein evaluation of the manipulated variable information involves analyzing the manipulated variable information relative to predetermined test information.

Claim 23 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 20, wherein execution of the at least one task involves directing

the performance of at least one control task in relation to at least one fuel dispenser position.

Claim 24 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, further comprises:

a variable table operatively associated with said agent facility, said variable table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith and variable information pertaining to the respective event; and

an event table operatively associated with said agent facility, said event table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with relevant variable information from said variable table; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field

providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation.

Claim 25 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said refueling environment;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor, said processor being configured to process at least one information element of said data facility in accordance with the event information received from said refueling environment; and

a rules facility, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively defining an evaluation function configured to evaluate the information processed by said processor and/or a tasking function configured to execute at least one task in accordance with results of the evaluation function.

Claim 26 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said refueling environment;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor, said processor being configured to process at least one information element of said data facility in accordance with the event information received from said refueling environment; and

a rules facility, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively defining: (i) a diagnostic function configured to perform a diagnostic operation in relation to information processed by said processor; (ii) a maintenance call operation configured to perform and/or direct the execution of at least one maintenance task in relation to at least one fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; (iii) a control operation configured to perform and/or direct the execution of at least one control task in relation to at least one fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; or (iv) any combination of (i)-(iii).

Claim 27 (withdrawn): The system as recited in Claim 17, wherein said management application being disposed remote from

said refueling environment and said agent facility being disposed within said refueling environment.

Claim 28 (currently amended): An apparatus, comprising:

a fuel dispenser position; and

an agent facility operatively associated with said fuel dispenser position[[.]]; said agent facility being configured to monitor said fuel dispenser position, analyze the monitoring results to determine an allowability thereof, and direct performance of at least one operation concerning said fuel dispenser position based on the analysis results, the at least one operation including at least one of a maintenance functionality, a diagnostic functionality, and a control functionality.

Claim 29 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a diagnostic test program operatively coupled to said receive means; and

a maintenance procedure program operatively associated with said diagnostic test program.

Claim 30 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a data processor operatively coupled to said receive means; and

a data analyzer operatively coupled to said data processor.

Claim 31 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, further comprises:

a fuel dispenser control program operatively associated with said agent facility.

Claim 32 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, further comprises:

an event table operatively associated with said agent facility.

Claim 33 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 32, further comprises:

a variable table operatively associated with said event table.

Claim 34 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 33, wherein:

said variable table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) variable information pertaining to the respective event; and

said event table including a plurality of event-specific records, each record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation involving variable information from said variable table; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation.

Claim 35 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor operatively associated with said receive means and said data facility; and

a rules facility operatively associated with said processor, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively including a first set of executable instructions defining an evaluation procedure and a second set of executable instructions defining a management task, the management task including an executable control task and/or an executable maintenance task.

Claim 36 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, wherein said agent facility further comprises:

a means to receive event information from said fuel dispenser position;

a data facility including a plurality of information elements each associated with a respective event;

a processor operatively associated with said receive means and said data facility; and

a rules facility operatively associated with said processor, said rules facility including a plurality of rules each associated with a respective event, each rule respectively

including (i) first program code defining a diagnostic operation, (ii) second program code defining a maintenance operation in relation to said fuel dispenser position, and (iii) third program code defining a control operation in relation to said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 37 (original): The apparatus as recited in Claim 28, further comprises:

a remote facility including a management application, said remote facility being disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position; and

a communications link between said agent facility and said remote facility.

Claim 38 (currently amended): A method for use with a fuel dispenser position in combination with an agent facility, said method comprising the steps of:

the agent facility receiving event information from said fuel dispenser position;

the agent facility processing the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; [[and]]

the agent facility evaluating the processed event information[[.]] <u>to determine an allowability thereof; and</u>

the agent facility causing performance of at least one operation concerning said fuel dispenser position based on the evaluation results, the at least one operation including at least one of a maintenance task, a diagnostic task, and a control task.

Claim 39 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, further comprises the steps of:

the agent facility executing a maintenance task and/or a control task in accordance with results of the evaluation.

Claim 40 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility communicating the event information received from said fuel dispenser position and/or the evaluation results to a remote facility disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 41 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility issuing control commands to said fuel dispenser position, in response to at least one directive received from a remote facility disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 42 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility performing at least one management task in relation to said fuel dispenser position, in response to at least one instruction received from a remote management application disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 43 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, wherein the processing step further comprises the steps of:

defining event-specific variable information;

associating the variable information with the event information; and

manipulating the variable information in accordance with the event information.

Claim 44 (original): The method as recited in Claim 43, wherein the manipulation step further comprises the step of:

adjusting an event-related variable and/or an event-related counter, the event-related variable being indicative of an operating parameter and/or an operating condition of said fuel dispenser position, the event-related counter being indicative of a count of event occurrence.

Claim 45 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, wherein the evaluation step further comprises the step of:

determining an allowability of the processed event information in comparative relation to reference information.

Claim 46 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, wherein the evaluation step further comprises the step of:

performing a rule-based analysis of the processed event information.

Claim 47 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, wherein the evaluation step further comprises the steps of:

defining a plurality of event-specific rules;

detecting an event based upon the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

applying the processed event information to at least one relevant one of said plurality of event-specific rules as specified by the detected event.

Claim 48 (original): The method as recited in Claim 47, wherein each rule respectively defining: (i) a diagnostic function configured to perform a diagnostic operation in relation to the processed event information; (ii) a maintenance call operation configured to perform and/or direct the execution of at least one maintenance task pertaining to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; (iii) a control operation configured to

perform and/or direct the execution of at least one control task pertaining to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic operation; or (iv) any combination of (i)-(iii).

Claim 49 (original): The method as recited in Claim 47, wherein the rule definition step further comprises the step of:

constructing an event table including a plurality of event-specific records;

each event table record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with event-specific variable information, the data processing operation being used by the event information processing step; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation.

Claim 50 (original): The method as recited in Claim 49, further comprises the step of:

constructing a variable table including a plurality of event-specific records;

each variable table record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) event-specific variable information pertaining to the respective event.

Claim 51 (original): The method as recited in Claim 38, wherein the evaluation step further comprises the steps of:

constructing a variable table including a plurality of event-specific records;

each variable table record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) event-specific variable information pertaining to the respective event;

constructing an event table including a plurality of event-specific records, each event table record respectively defining an executable evaluation procedure;

each event table record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions

defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with relevant variable information from the variable table, the data processing operation being used by the event information processing step; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation; and

utilizing the event table and the variable table to evaluate the processed event information by associating an event indicated by the event information with a relevant event-specific event table record and executing the corresponding evaluation procedure defined by the relevant event table record.

Claim 52 (original): A method for use with a fuel dispenser position in combination with an agent facility, said method comprising the steps of:

the agent facility receiving event information from said fuel dispenser position; and

the agent facility performing a diagnostic test procedure in relation to the event information received from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 53 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility performing a maintenance operation and/or a control operation in relation to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic test procedure performance.

Claim 54 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, wherein the diagnostic test procedure performance step further comprises the steps of:

defining a plurality of event-specific rules;

detecting an event based upon the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

causing at least one relevant one of said plurality of event-specific rules as specified by the detected event to process and/or evaluate the event information.

Claim 55 (original): The method as recited in Claim 54, wherein the rule definition step further comprises the step of:

constructing an event table including a plurality of event-specific records;

each event table record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with event-specific variable information; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation.

Claim 56 (original): The method as recited in Claim 55, further comprises the step of:

constructing a variable table including a plurality of event-specific records;

each variable table record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) event-specific variable information pertaining to the respective event.

Claim 57 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, wherein the diagnostic test procedure performance step further comprises the steps of:

defining event-specific variable information;

associating the variable information with the event information;

manipulating the variable information in accordance with the event information; and

evaluating the manipulated variable information.

Claim 58 (original): The method as recited in Claim 57, wherein the manipulation step further comprises the step of:

adjusting an event-related variable and/or an event-related counter, the event-related variable being indicative of an operating parameter and/or an operating condition of said fuel dispenser position, the event-related counter being indicative of a count of event occurrence.

Claim 59 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility communicating the event information received from said fuel dispenser position and/or the evaluation results to a remote facility disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 60 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility issuing control commands to said fuel dispenser position, in response to at least one directive received from a remote facility disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 61 (original): The method as recited in Claim 52, further comprises the step of:

the agent facility performing at least one management task in relation to said fuel dispenser position, in response to at least one instruction received from a remote management application disposed apart from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 62 (currently amended): A computer program product for use in an agent facility having a computer environment, the agent facility operatively associated with a fuel dispenser position, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code thereon executable by the computer environment, the computer readable program code comprising:

first program code <u>at the agent facility</u> for processing event information operatively received by said agent facility from said fuel dispenser position; and

second program code at the agent facility for evaluating the processed event information[[.]] to determine an allowability thereof;

said second program code also for causing performance of at least one operation concerning said fuel dispenser position based on the evaluation results, the at least one operation including at least one of a maintenance task, a diagnostic task, and a control task.

Claim 63 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 62, wherein the computer readable program code further comprises:

program code for executing a maintenance task and/or a control task relative to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the evaluation provided by the second program code.

Claim 64 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 62, wherein the computer readable program code further comprises:

program code for defining a plurality of executable event-specific rules;

program code for detecting an event based upon the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

program code for applying the processed event information to at least one relevant one of said plurality of event-specific rules as specified by the detected event for execution thereof.

Claim 65 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 62, further comprises:

a first data facility including a variable table having a plurality of event-specific records;

each variable table record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) event-specific variable information pertaining to the respective event;

a second data facility including an event table having a plurality of event-specific records, each event table record respectively defining an executable evaluation procedure;

each event table record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with relevant variable information from the variable table; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value

field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation; and

the second program code further includes third program code for utilizing the event table and the variable table to evaluate the processed event information by associating an event indicated by the event information with a relevant event-specific event table record and then executing the corresponding evaluation procedure defined by the relevant event table record.

Claim 66 (currently amended): A computer program product for use in an agent facility having a computer environment, the agent facility operatively associated with a fuel dispenser position, the computer program product comprising a computer usable medium having computer readable program code thereon executable by the computer environment, the computer readable program code comprising:

first program code <u>at the agent facility</u> for defining and performing a diagnostic test procedure in relation to event information received from said fuel dispenser position.

Claim 67 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 66, wherein the computer readable program code further comprises:

program code for performing a maintenance operation and/or a control operation in relation to said fuel dispenser position, in accordance with the results of the diagnostic test procedure performance provided by said first program code.

Claim 68 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 66, wherein the first program code further comprises:

program code for defining a plurality of executable event-specific rules;

program code for detecting an event based upon the event information received from said fuel dispenser position; and

program code for causing at least one relevant one of said plurality of event-specific rules as specified by the detected event to process and/or evaluate the event information by execution thereof.

Claim 69 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 66, wherein the first program code further comprises:

second program code for defining event-specific variable information;

third program code for associating the variable information with the event information;

fourth program code for manipulating the variable information in accordance with the event information; and

fifth program code for evaluating the manipulated variable information.

Claim 70 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 69, wherein the fourth program code further comprises:

program code for adjusting an event-related variable and/or an event-related counter, the event-related variable being indicative of an operating parameter and/or an operating condition of said fuel dispenser position, the event-related counter being indicative of a count of event occurrence.

Claim 71 (original): The computer program product as recited in Claim 66, further comprises:

a first data facility including a variable table having a plurality of event-specific records;

each variable table record respectively including (i) an event indicator indicative of the respective event associated therewith, and (ii) event-specific variable information pertaining to the respective event;

a second data facility including an event table having a plurality of event-specific records, each event table record respectively defining an executable evaluation procedure;

each event table record respectively including at least one of: (i) an event field indicative of an event associated with the record; (ii) an action type field providing instructions defining a data processing operation for performance in conjunction with relevant variable information from the variable table; (iii) a test type field providing instructions defining an analysis operation for performance in conjunction with results of the data processing operation; (iv) a test value field defining a predetermined test value for use in the analysis operation; and (v) an escalation event field providing instructions defining at least one task for execution depending upon the outcome of the analysis operation; and

the first program code further includes program code for utilizing the event table and the variable table to process and evaluate the event information by associating an event indicated by the event information with a relevant event-specific event table record and then executing the corresponding evaluation procedure defined by the relevant event table record.